



**NOAA, NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE, WEATHER FORECAST OFFICE**

**Miami, Florida 33165**

<http://weather.gov/southflorida>

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## **15-Year Anniversary of Downtown Miami Tornado**



One of the most memorable weather events in the last 20 years in South Florida was the tornado that struck portions of Little Havana, Downtown Miami, Biscayne Bay and Miami Beach around 2 PM on May 12, 1997. The tornado cut an eight-mile long, 30 to 150-yard wide path through these areas as it moved east-northeast at 20 to 25 mph. The final rating was an F-1 with estimated maximum winds of

100 to 110 mph. While not the strongest tornado to affect the Miami metro area, its path through a densely-developed urban core resulted in \$525,000 in damage, injuring 12 people.

Many people to this very day remember this tornado, largely because it was seen by thousands of people working downtown and captured “live” by several TV stations from their well-placed “tower-cams” on top of downtown skyscrapers.

Daniel Brown, currently a senior hurricane specialist at the National Hurricane Center but who worked at the Miami Forecast Office at the time, wrote a detailed report of the event which can be found [here](#).

[This YouTube video](#) provides a nice compilation of media coverage of the tornado, including a detailed analysis of the tornado’s formation.